





THE WESLEYAN





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Life is a bubble of laughter . . .
or the still cry of a prayer
sunk deep in our souls.
Sometimes
it breaks through the surface of artificialities,
and the dumb voices within us speak;
the wild songs of our hearts
are lifted to the sky;
the sober thoughts of our minds
march in state across white pages.
Sometimes, because we are spirits intangible,
we live . . .
and words leap into being
to arrest that moment's swift pace
and to sketch hastily the form and face
of life.

Exception

BETTY EATON DIXON

SHE didn't have Mary Lin fooled. Not for one minute. That sweet and gracious expression of her stepmother's; the pretty, silvery-goldish hair lying close to the head in deep waves; the soft blue eyes which *looked* kind enough—all of these might be present in her stepmother, but Mary Lin knew the woman was as mean as she could be. She didn't have to prove it to Mary Lin, who had read all about the stepmothers in fairy tales. Think of poor Cinderella; there was Snow White, too. Yes, Mary Lin knew everything there was to know about them.

Long ago sitting in her own mother's lap she had learned: "But the wicked stepmother, though she smiled so sweetly, was always thinking up things she could do to hurt her husband's daughter.

"One day in the winter, when her husband was away from home, she cut out a paper dress to fit the little girl.

" 'Put on this dress quickly; get the largest basket in the house, and go fetch me some strawberries.'

" 'But there aren't any strawberries at this time of year,' protested the maiden.

" 'Do you dare to contradict me? Take the basket and go!' said the stepmother, thrusting it into her hands.

But she thought in her mind, "Out-of-doors in this dreadful night she will be frozen to death, and my eyes will never see her again."

That was from *Three Little Men in the Woods*. But *her* stepmother would never do a thing like that. Not that she wouldn't want to though. People just didn't do things like that in these times.

Her own mother had told her so when she had burst into tears over the fate of the poor girl in the woods.

"But, darling, I thought you liked this story," she had said. "You chose it for me to read to you."

"But I do like it, Mother. It's just that poor little girl with only a paper dress. Oh, why is it stepmothers are so cruel?"

"Why, honey, they aren't. It's just in stories of times long ago that they did things like that."

"But, Mother, s'posing you should die and Daddy would get married again. Then I'd have a stepmother—and she wouldn't be as good to me as you are!"

"But, darling, I haven't any intentions of dying. Not for a long time yet. And besides you know that anybody Daddy would pick to marry would be good to you."

"I guess so—but she wouldn't love me, like you do, even if I weren't a good little girl. You say you love me even when you have to *spank* me!"

"So I do, darling."

"She—she wouldn't!"

"I—I suppose not."

No-o. Her stepmother wouldn't send her out in the cold dressed in paper to pick strawberries in the winter. But neither would she spank her and love her at the same time. If you could *spank* a person and love her *still*—

Her stepmother didn't spank her at all!

She just said, "Mary Lin, I'm going to have to tell your Daddy."

And then Daddy would spank her. And to be spanked by Daddy, even though it was the merest *pit-pat—!*

Mother never told Daddy when Mary Lin was naughty. She would just administer the spanking herself—which was better. *Much* better!

Her stepmother said she "couldn't" spank her. Mary Lin had heard her say to Daddy, "I can't, Don, I just can't allow myself to . . . another woman's child . . . "

But that wasn't true, for she had spanked Coralie. And Coralie was another woman's child. Her very own sister's.

It had happened the day Coralie's mother had gone to the hospital, sick, and Coralie had come to spend a week or so at Mary Lin's house.

Up-stairs in her room they had decided to play school. Since Mary Lin was older, she would be the teacher.

"I'm going to dictate. You write on the board with this piece of chalk," Mary Lin had said.

"It's too little," protested Coralie.

"No, it isn't, and do as the teacher says," yelled Mary Lin, grabbing Coralie's hand to force her to write.

Her firm little fingers had left red marks on Coralie's soft hand.

In anger Coralie had pushed Mary Lin away. Mary Lin had fallen. Then her stepmother rushed in and spanked Coralie. *Spanked* her! And she was another woman's child.

So she had lied. Just the way stepmothers in stories lied.

But she loved Coralie, she did. Because after the two girls had been tucked in bed, she had crept into the room, gone over to where Coralie lay sniffling, and had knelt at her side.

"Don't cry, Coralie," she had said. "Aunt Roberta is sorry she had to spank you today."

This brought a fresh gust of tears from Coralie. But she allowed herself to be snuggled into the crook of the stepmother's arm for periodic sniffles. Mary Lin, lying in the bed across the room, had suddenly turned her face to the wall, her eyes smarting and her throat hot and achey.

They had thought she wouldn't remember. She had been such a little girl. Only six.

"She'll forget," they had said. Everybody but Grandma, Mother's mother. Mary Lin had stayed with her over a

SHORELINE

Liquid emerald treads the sands
To the foot of a sacred bower,
And gently presses its cool sweet kiss
Upon the gods of arboreal power.

A palm, silver-etched and proud,
In the soft fusion of dying day
Raises its quivering fingers
Wet with emerald spray.

—Joyce Turner.

year while Daddy went away "to get over it."

She couldn't forget while she was with Grandma. Grandma made Mother so alive. Sometimes you could just think Mother had stepped out and would be back in a little bit.

Grandma had a big, fat album with a clasp on it, full of pictures of Mother. Mother when she was a baby, lying on a rug. Mother when she was a little girl like Mary Lin. Mother in her confirmation dress with her hair curled and a great sash around her waist. Mother at college. Mother and Daddy just before they married.

Grandma told stories about the pictures, too. "And that's Mother when she was four—wasn't she lovely, Mary Lin?"

Mary Lin would have liked to stay at Grandma's always. But Daddy came back one day with a new stepmother.

"You'll have to go to him, Mary Lin," said Grandma. "He wants you. He's your Daddy."

But before she let her out she gathered her fiercely to her.

"Don't forget your mother, Mary Lin," she said; and tears rolled down her cheeks. "Don't ever forget her!"

She gave her a little picture in a paper frame, like a small, brown book.

"Keep this, Mary Lin. Put it away where no one else but you will see it. And take it out to look at it every night before you go to sleep. It will be then as if Mother were watching over you."

"I will, Grandma," promised Mary Lin. "And I won't forget. I won't forget ever."

And she hadn't. Lying there in her bed that night, face turned to the wall, listening to her stepmother murmur to Coralie, she remembered in a sharp flash Mother with her small, pointed, smooth face snuggling *her*—coming into her room before she went to her own bed, and whispering into the dark, "All right, darling?" And Mary Lin would smile in her sleep and make a little contented sound.

Her stepmother didn't come in to fuss over her after she had fallen to sleep. Though once Mary Lin had dreamed that she had. That she had come into her room and knelt down by her bed. And lifted one by one her fingers, placing a kiss on the tip of each. Somehow in that dream she had been sure that her stepmother was crying, not loudly, but the way grown-up people cry, without sound, with the tears squeezing out of their eyes, and their mouths all screwed up, and their throats working.

"Mary Lin," she had said in just a whisper, "Why are you afraid of me? Don't you know I love you? Don't you know that I wouldn't ever—ever do anything to hurt you?"

But it had been just a dream. Because when she opened her eyes, no one was there. No one, though her fingers were somehow wet.

On Sundays, when Daddy didn't have to go to the office and they all could sleep late, Mary Lin had her "cuddling" hour. Bright in the morning, she would wake and call from her bedroom.

"Mother! Mother, de-ar! It's Sunday! May I come in and cuddle?"

"This very minute," Mother would call back instantly.

Mary Lin would go pattering down the hall in her bare feet. And there would be Daddy sleeping in his bed near the window, and Mother in her bed nearest the door—her curly hair black against the pillow, her nightie all pretty with bows of ribbon.

"Come on and crawl in," she would say and hold the covers open.

But when Mary Lin cuddled with Daddy it *was* a treat. He was so warm and his arms were so big.

These days there was no cuddling. Not even with Daddy. Nor would there ever be again. Mary Lin knew that. For once, just after she had returned home from Grandma's, she had awakened early in the dawn from a terrible dream. Frightened and shivery in the half light, she had called out, "Mother!"

She sometimes did that when she was quite awake and forgot. But then she opened her eyes and remembered, and thought of going to Daddy. Perhaps he would let her snuggle in with him for just a little while until she forgot her dream. Carefully, so as not to make any noise, she climbed out of her bed and went down the hall to Daddy's room. But *she* was there. *Her* head was nestled in the crook of Daddy's arm with her silvery-goldish hair splashed all over the pillow. Suddenly she felt alone, shut out from these two who seemed to have found a world all to themselves. She wanted to cry, but instead turned and fled back to her room.

Her stepmother never put her arms around her. Only when Mary Lin had first returned home from Grandma's had she done that. Mary Lin hadn't responded to her because she had been afraid of her. And now, though there were always bells in her stepmother's voice and though she always smiled, she was straight-up-and-down.

Such dreary days. No one to laugh with, no one to tease with.

One morning Mary Lin missed the picture of Mother. She had kept it in her top drawer with the coral beads and ivory fan. She must not have put it back when she took it out to look at before going to bed. And it wasn't till she was sitting in school the next morning that she suddenly remembered.

When she got home at lunch she went straight to her room to look for it. But it was neither in the desk, under the pillow, nor behind the bed.

On questioning Helza, the Finnish maid, she was told, "Yeh, I see. The missus, she picks her up in bedroom."

And then the doorbell rang. And Helza opened it on the policeman.

"Mrs. Cameron?" he asked, consulting a little book.

"Wait, I call," said Helza.

Mary Lin's stepmother came out of her room, alarm in her eyes.

"Don't get excited, ma'am, but it's about Mr. Cameron—he's hurt," said the policeman.

"Hurt!" Her hand went to her throat.

"He was just passing by this building, y' see, when these thugs dashed out. We was after them with our guns, and by accident Mr. Cameron was shot."

"Shot!" Her shriek was followed by a scene of wild confusion. Mary Lin had never seen her stepmother act like that. She didn't seem to know what she was doing. She flew first one way, then the other. She seized her coat and couldn't find the armhole. She forgot her hat and had to go back for it. She went circling around for her bag that was lying right there on the hall table. All the while she sobbed, "Oh! Oh! Oh!"

Then, "Helza, look after the child," she cried, and ran out ahead of the policeman.

Mary Lin stood alone in the hall and wild thoughts raced furiously through her little head. Daddy was hurt, shot. They had taken him to the hospital. That

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The Stephen Inheritance

CAROLYN MALONE

CHARACTERS

MARTHA Stephen, an elderly woman of about fifty.

Mark Stephen, her husband, about fifty-five.

Mr. Martin, small town preacher, about forty-five.

Mrs. Pottle, newly rich city woman, gaudily dressed, about forty.

Mark Stephen, Jr., young man of about twenty-three, nice looking and well dressed.

SCENE I

The play takes place in a little New England village which thrives on its sentiment for its lovely old churches and homes adorned by hand carvings and hand-wrought irons; a village where the people actually work to keep out any traces of modern living and the modern city.

The scene is a small community church. On the stage there is the pulpit surrounded by a handsome chancel rail, with a few rows of pews to the side. It is late at night and the lights on the stage are only bright enough for us to discern two figures, an elderly man and woman, who seem to be working at some manual labor as though there were not a minute to lose.

Martha: (*Standing near her husband who is working on a section of an unfinished chancel rail, a copy of the one already there.*) Mark, I knew it would work out. This rail looks so much like that one that an expert in carvings would think they were both done by the same man.

Mark: (*Looks up at Martha.*) I've had a funny feeling the whole time we have been doing this that old man Stephen himself was standing right over me, watching every move I made.

Martha: He must have felt mighty good when he finished carving a piece as perfect as that.

Mark: Do you suppose he has been helping me? Sometimes I wonder if I will ever be able to come to church again, realizing what we've done.

Martha: Well, you know we wouldn't be able to come if we didn't do it. Your family, the Stephens, gave this chancel rail to the church when it was built, and to take it away would be the same as taking away part of the church.

Mark: Have you seen the woman who is buying it?

Martha: She's coming after it tomorrow. I haven't seen her, but Mr. Martin said that the chapel where she's putting it is some modern place, and that it will be the only thing there that isn't new.

Mark: (*Thoughtfully.*) If we just didn't need the money so badly. But it will help us, and anyway, I guess you can't expect people like us to be able to give so much to the church.

Martha: (*Stoops down to help. She begins putting varnish on the rail.*) Here, I can start giving this a coat. Will this finishing lacquer be dry by morning?

Mark: If we hurry. (*Moves about feebly.*)

Martha: Mark, I know you are tired out, but in just a little now we will be finished. It will be a relief to know the Stephen rail is saved. (*Mark begins to move the old rail.*) Here, let me do that. You know you're not strong enough yet to be lifting anything that heavy. (*Helps Mark. They put the valuable rail over to the side of the room.*)

Mark: Now, we'll just leave it here. I told Mr. Martin that I would have the new rail ready by tonight. He will want to have it put back when they move mine out tomorrow. (*Mark sits down feebly on the first pew while Martha works a bit more on the new rail.*) That old piece looks finer every time I see it. I wonder that I was able to even copy it.

Martha: Everyone knows you've got his talent; that's why they chose you to make a new one. They all realize what this piece means to you.

Mark: They won't realize that I've swapped carvings on them though; that I am sure.

Martha: It does seem like we should tell at least the preacher, doesn't it?

Mark: Do you think ?

Martha: He would understand the way we feel about it, don't you guess?

Mark: I wonder if—

Martha: Come; it is getting late. Can you help me move this rail into place?

Mark: (*Kicks a few tools aside and gives Martha a weak hand with the rail.*) Careful now, to get it in the same place. I can't see the line; you'll have to come straighten this side.

Martha: You rest now. I will get it fixed in a minute.

Mark: Mart, it will be something that no one will ever know about.

Martha: (*Looks carefully around the rail to see that everything is in place. She begins to put the tools in a sack.*) Mark, you have made a perfect copy. I am sure your great-great-grandfather is mighty proud if he is seeing what you have done. (*They get up to go out, carrying with them the sack of tools.*)

Martha: Now that this is over Mark, you will be able to rest more. I will be

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SEA REVERIE

Muddy waters of the gulf here and there
flecked with foam,
Pasteled sky and white-sailed ships are
calling me to roam.
The white sails are full now; red flags
float up to the mast tips
While I rest here on the white rough
sand, and the day sails out with the
ships.
The ships will go so far away, they'll
roam to ports unknown;
They'll see new sights in the sunrise
bright—tall castles topped with
domes.
They are out of sight now, as if in the
ocean they'd dipped.
But I rest still on the white rough sand,
and the day has sailed out with the
ships.

—Winnett Turner.

Analyzing Your Individuality

ADDIE RIE McKELLAR

EACH year many students start to college and wonder what they can expect to get out of this experience. Probably the most important thing anyone receives from a college education is the ability to better understand himself, that is, to find his real self. If a person achieves this knowledge no matter what he does or where he goes, he will succeed, for that understanding is his very own and cannot be destroyed by the forces around him.

The problems of growing up so harass the average freshman that he cannot know where his real ambition lies or what place he can fill in the grown-up world. College courses and activities provide an opportunity for him to integrate his interests and focus his energies so that life for him centers about a single meaningful purpose.

One of the specific ways in which college helps students to better understand themselves is through the use of mental and personality tests. Each year all over the country new college students take these tests. They meet the barrage with various attitudes of fear, resignation, wonder, nonchalance, and finally relief when they finish. The results of the tests are kept in strict confidence and never do they influence grades. Their sole purpose is to help the student. If he discovers he is not up to the standard he would like, he knows better where and how to begin to reach that standard. In cases of difficulty in studies, the scholastic tests give a teacher the insight he needs to be of help to a student.

This way of dealing with people as individuals is a part of the new educational program. The old idea of mass education was that all people had the same chances and abilities and should do the same things with equal ease and efficiency. Today we know that each individual is different from all others and that he is entitled to the respect and opportunities due to his own personality. The mental and personality tests help to make it possible for each student to live and work to the best of his ability.

Here at Wesleyan Dr. Raleigh Drake is in charge of administering these tests. This year he gave two mental tests and one personality test. The former are the Otis and Henmon-Nelson. In order to be fair to the student two mental tests are used to check against each other. Occasionally a student makes a slightly lower grade due to nervousness, but with the results from two tests there is only a small chance of error.

The personality test is the Bell Adjustment Inventory, which is one of the best of its kind and has high rating both in its reliability and validity. It covers four vital phases that largely influence the unfolding personality: home adjustment, health and its relation to the others, social maturity, and emotional stability.

Since a child receives his earliest impressions of life and people in the home, he learns there to think of himself in relation to his environment. Early influences continuing through later activities determine the course his attitudes will take. If he is successful in his efforts to win and hold the love and interest of his family, and if he finds satisfaction in most things he does, he will be active, aggressive, and well adjusted. If he has difficulty in finding a place for himself in the life of the rest of his family, and if his activities are continually interfered with, he will become absorbed in his own inner resources and will learn to distrust and perhaps to fear people and outside influences.

Sanity and efficiency can only be achieved through emotional stability. Hence an understanding of the proper sphere of the emotions and an ability to control them so that they do not interfere with clear thinking is of vital importance in present day living.

Of social development and health, it may be said that the nature of these two factors alone can make the difference between accomplishment and unsuccessful effort.

It is interesting to notice how closely related are these four divisions. Their correlations are as follows: home and health, .43; home and emotional, .38; home and social, .04; health and social, .24; health and emotional, .53; social and emotional, .47. The smallest correlation is that between the home and social adjustments; the largest one is between the health and emotional adjustments. The high correlations of health with the others indicate its importance in the world of today.

In the present civilization everyone needs to be able to stand on his own feet and face competition whether it be in a business, social, intellectual, or physical way. The aim of college is to help the individual to find and increase the best in him so that he may realize a fuller and more successful life.

BETWEEN SEASONS

If we could go to sleep one night
And feel the summer's gentle stir
Around us, soothing us to rest—
Then wake again aware of cold
That through the night has filled the air,
If we could know this sudden change,
And never see the stealing steps
Of autumn as she slips her hand
Between the earth and summer's warmth;
How we would miss the red and brown
And yellow leaves that curl and fall!
But, too, would not we then be spared
The longing for a summer sky
That laughs and calls to trees and birds,
And thoughts that push into our minds
When teasing autumn's warm days come?
Days that make us smile that here
Is one more day of summer's share
That dropped behind her as she fled?
If we could know a sudden change—
Be sure a clean cut would be made,
A cut that leaves no bitter ends—
We'd be content, as seasons go,
Just to wait for summer days again.

—Margaret Hunter.

Thought Is a Falling Leaf

MARY LEILA GARDNER

In the dim long ago when man, a savage half-wild creature of the virgin forests, sketched the first crude figure of a bear on the wall of his cave—what thoughts were moving in his mind? When he stumbled on a singing reed and learned from the wind how to invoke its music—what emotions vibrated with the tone in his ear? And that other miracle—the symphony of speech that sprang from half-dumb throats—what destiny shaped its accents?

Perhaps never can we know the exact origin of the primitive creative impulse, the how of it; but beneath puzzling obscurities is a current we can partially understand—the why of it.

There came a time when, after early man had fished and killed deer and eaten to his heart's content, after he had found the warmth of fire and shelter, and while he invented increasingly useful tools and effective weapons—he could sit down in the evening feeling secure and at peace with the world he knew.

But in his mind were a thousand hungry mouths asking to be fed. In his heart were naked feelings demanding warmth and protection from the raw edges of the world. Here was energy which had not been burnt up in the ordinary cycles of life. Here was energy not dormant, not waiting placidly for the moment it would be needed, but surging restlessly through the man's soul, impatiently knocking at the door between dream and reality.

The cave man did not sketch his bear merely because he had an idle moment. He did it because there was no alternative. In his mind was an image. The vividness of it hurt his eyes; the intensity of reverberation as the caged thing beat on its bars gave him no peace. At last he was compelled to release the imprisoned thought.

The present age seems far removed from that first crude effort. Proportion and perspective have made our painting more life-like; the coloring of harmony has enriched our music; language has been softened into fine shadings of meaning, and literature is expressed in varied forms. But sometimes in our concern about the method of release, we forget the essential element—the imprisoned thought, the inner compulsion.

What is this thing? How does it happen that living ideas grow in the depths of a mind—that they become more real, more vital, and more intense than anything that exists outside? Why do they relentlessly hammer at the door of speech? How do they emerge at last—intangibles bearing form and shape and color?

We have no answers. We only know that from the whirl of fast-moving images, pictures imprint themselves upon the mind . . . that to this chaos of impressions comes, haltingly or swift as comets, meaning and vision . . . and that simple emotions—human and tender, bitter, or despairing—breathe there the spirit of life.

Once he has found the concrete expressions of his pent-up thoughts, why does a man scatter them along the paths of the world? Why does he drop them on a wind that sweeps them over the earth like autumn leaves—bright-eyed children that go from the parent stem to dance gaily, ecstatically, briefly, and then lose themselves in the cold winter? Thoughts must be unintelligible, unappreciated, transient in the world's memory unless they fall from giant trees. Why does he trust them to the treacherous wind?

Perhaps because, before they fade and die, the vigor and spirit of tiny thoughts can blow away cobwebs. Perhaps because even puppet-ideas—if they perform in a life-like manner—can put warmth in the heart and a gurgle of laughter under the ribs and thoughtfulness behind the brow. Perhaps because in any expression of fear and joy and desire men see reflected their own feelings, and seeing them thus, understand them better and go back to life with a wider sympathy for its perversities.

Scribe's Page

GIVE TO THE BROKEN

The pipes of Pan are sad tonight,
Playing taps on a broken reed
For broken things.
Listen. He is crouching
At the edge of that last light
Too far to see,
And on the wind alone his music.

The wind brought rising trumpets in the morning,
And hoofbeats in the middle of the night.
But now, lightly as a grieving Pan can whisper,
Comes taps
For broken things.
—The wings of Icarus
That gloried up into the heart of light—
And those who follow Icarus and fall.
The dreams men dream and try against the world.
And the hearts of all good fighters
Who know they lose.

No tribute in the wind to them—
But when the last light softens,
Pan—play taps.

—A. P., '40.

THE TRAPEZE ARTIST

Man walked insignificantly around on the sawdust
Till God raised the life net of faith.
Once atop the web, Man bows briefly—but humbly.
Leaving his safety plane of conscience
He swings out on breath-taking chances;
Sometimes looking back to his net—never for long;
Testing new sways, grappling new partners, never still;
But God knows and fears not since the daring act will end,
And Man must return once more to his net of faith.

—L. W., '39.



AUTUMN DAY

There is a secret singing sound
Of rain that falls on leaf strewn ground;
The day is filled with tender pain
Of beauty dying in autumn rain.

The deepening quiet casts a spell
As in a hidden fairy dell.
A sudden sound from down the street—
My saddened heart leaps out to meet.

The dreary calm is shattered by
A laughing child as he goes by.

—D. S., '39.

THE RINGMASTER

Hard black eyes
In a chalky face;
A make believe mouth
That his fingers trace.

Lines of toil
Hidden with paint;
Covering the devil,
Disclosing the saint.

Sparkling eyes
Seven years old,
Adoring a man
Glamorous and bold.

A man of power
With a snapping whip;
A dashing man
With a merry quip.

—J. K., '40.

FLIGHT

Icarus, thy fiber-wings flashed arrows toward the sun;
The salt dew of the ocean crystallized:
Then screaming down the skies, your feathers scattered—
Settled upon foam, to float
Long after you plunged, leaded, on the rocks;
Spattered the sea with your blood
And slid, a throbbing pulp,
Into the sea.
Oe Icare!

—L. L., '40.

ELF BALLOON

I dance in circles in the floating air;
I woo the laughing night; I weave a band
Of singing thoughts to glisten in my hair,
And from the moon I pluck a golden strand
Of ecstasy, a thin spun fragil thing
Shaped out of nothing by an unseen hand.
And to the bright fire breathing stars I fling
A joy no mortal ear could understand,
An elfin glee born of a phantom ray
Of beauty that I drank at dusk; I tease
The tall cool winds, and in the grass I play
With silvery dripping dew that rides the breeze,
And both of us scarce feel the earth, so high
Our wing-capped heels climb up the misty sky.

—M. G., '39.

TELEGRAM

I've blown a secret to the stars
To be relayed on through,
That is why they twinkle so—
They're wafting my love to you!

—B. K., '39.

Stay In Your Own Back Yard

DOLORES SCHATZMAN

DORIE was very proud of her back yard. She lived all alone in a small shingled house, about three miles from town; and every morning before she went to the office where she worked as a private secretary, she fed her chickens and pulled Johnson grass out of her flowers. To look at Dorie's fluffy hair, and her pert nose you would never guess how smart and efficient she really was. Her life was as well planned and as neatly managed as her back yard. The only disrupting factor in her orderly existence was Speck, a wiry fox-terrier, and his lazy, good-looking master, John Morgan, who lived in the house next door to Dorie. The house was shingled like Dorie's and the yard was the same size, but there the resemblance ceased. John's yard was full of tall grass and small bits of paper. The dog house needed a new coat of paint, and a rusty tomato can perched on top like a chimney. In other words, it was a mess and Dorie never hesitated to tell John that.

One morning, Dorie's cocky red rooster, who had been idly searching for a stray piece of corn, suddenly beat his wings against his body, lowered his head, and charged fullback-fashion at Speck, who was chasing the hens around the yard. Speck ran around, yelping, searching for a way of escape. At last, finding the broken board in the fence, he squeezed through into his own yard, and turning triumphantly, barked at the rooster, who had bumped into the fence.

Simultaneously, the back doors of the two houses burst open, and John and Dorie ran out.

"I'd thank you to keep your ugly mutt in your own yard, Mr. Morgan," stormed Dorie, "I saw the whole thing through my window."

John looked at the window, around the yard, and finally at Dorie. He seemed to see her for the first time. "Funny that you waited 'til he had escaped from that red-devil of yours before you came out," he said, "Why, that snapper-beaked sultan might have killed him."

"I wish he had. He's as no account as you are, John Morgan." Dorie stamped her foot. "Why aren't you looking for a job this morning?"

"You're squashing a petunia, darling," John replied with a smile and, "I don't want a job this morning."

Dorie turned angrily, and in her haste stepped on the rooster, who squawked, and glared at her with red-rimmed eyes.

FINALE

A rose is injured when it falls,
Its petals bruised and crushed.
Its life-blood flows upon the ground,
Its beauty paled and hushed.

E'en though its earthly life is shed,
Its fragrance lingers long—
A memory of a soul whose task
Closed like a broken song.

—Leola Burnett.

"Dorie, please don't be that way," John said, pleadingly, "I told you I'd get a job as soon as you promised you'd marry me."

Dorie drew herself up proudly, and again stamped on the petunia, "I wouldn't marry you if you were the last person in the world. It's bad enough having to live next door to you, and that flea-bitten, speckled dog of yours, without having to live with you. No, thank you, I know when I am well off!"

At the mention of his name, Speck stood on his hind legs, and held up his front paws. That usually brought him praise, but when no one noticed him he sat down, cocked his head on the side, and reflectively scratched his ear. John flushed a deep red. "Well, if that's the way you feel, Dorie, I may as well give up. I suppose the wonderful Mr. Hapgood, Jr., the great business man, possesses a French poodle—minus flees."

It was Dorie's turn to flush. "At least he has a job and can support a dog. That's more than you can do," she said, looking at Speck, who was eating the mush that Dorie had put there for her hens.

Dorie usually enjoyed the ride to the office in the morning, especially in the spring. But that morning, she didn't even see the stately flag lilies that lined the streets, and the flowering dogwood that grew on the avenue to town. Nor could she smell the freshly mowed grass, nor the wisteria. It wasn't until she reached the office, and a soft breeze suddenly turned bold, blew her hair wildly about her face, that she even remembered that it was spring. "I hate this time of the year," she muttered to herself as she went in.

In the office, Mr. Hapgood had placed violets on her desk, and for a minute she struggled with a wild impulse to hurl them from the window. Mr. Hapgood smiled at her insidiously, and smoothed his black hair. "You're looking lovely this morning, Dorie," he exclaimed and stepped closer to her. "Say, how would you like to go dancing tonight? I hear there is to be a full moon." Again he smiled his spidery smile. Dorie shook her head, and a hurt look came into Mr. Hapgood's eyes. "Now, why did I do that?" demanded Dorie of the violets when Hapgood left the room. "He will be in a horrible mood all day, and we would have had fun at the dance. Nothing seems to go right this morning."

The hands on the clock on Dorie's desk seemed possessed with a perverse spirit that day. She would glance quickly at them, but the next time she looked, they would be in the same spot. Once she could have sworn that they had turned the wrong way. When at last both stopped on the number six, Dorie grabbed her hat, and ran from the office, not bothering to replace the bowl of violets that she had overturned in her haste. Outside, the air seemed to be singing, and the trees

beckoned to her to hurry home. But that was nonsense, of course. It was her imagination that made the mocking birds seem to be singing especially for her.

When she reached her little white house, she ran into the back yard. She almost hugged the old red rooster in her joy, but refrained because she knew that his dignity should be respected. She bent over her pansies and began pulling weeds, watching the house next door out of the corner of her eye. Once when the back door slammed, she pulled a pansy in her excitement; but it was only the cook. It was John's and Speck's habit to come out after supper, and lean against the fence while John made caustic comments on the cocky attitude of the red rooster. Tonight, however, they didn't come. Dorie pulled weeds until the dusk gathered so thick that she couldn't see, and hens clucked softly in their sleep in the hen house. Occasionally one would almost fall from her perch, and would regain her balance with loud flutterings, but the night was otherwise still as death. Dorie, at last, went in the house, and sat down wearily on the sofa to wait. The night wore on and still John did not come, so kicking a chair out of her way, she went to bed.

A long time after the tears on her pillow had dried, Dorie woke to hear her hens cackling frantically, and a dog barking under her window. Throwing a robe around her shoulders, she rushed out into the yard. She arrived just in time to see John coming out of her henhouse.

"John Morgan, what ever are you doing in my yard at this time of the night waking up my chickens?" she demanded.

John smiled apologetically, and pulled a frightened Negro out of the house. "Speck and I heard this thief out here, and came to investigate. We caught him just as he was stealing your chickens."

"Oh, John, you were so brave to stop him!" Dorie's eyes grew wide with admiration.

"Will you marry me now, if I get a job in the morning?"

"Of course, darling, and Speck can go on our honeymoon!" Dorie rushed into John's arms, and buried her face in his neck.

The forgotten Negro shuffled out of the yard, and mumbled, "White folks sho' is crazy. I ain't never had no white man come and pay me money to steal no chickens before!"

EXCEPTION

(Continued from page 4)

meant he would not be coming home in the evening. She would be alone with her stepmother. At that thought a strange, frightened little flutter went through her. Suddenly all the stories that had ever been read to her about stepmothers came crashing into her mind. It was when the husbands were away from home that the stepmothers in the stories had committed their bad deeds—poisoned the apple for Snow White, made the paper dress. And there was the picture of Mother. Her stepmother had taken it this very day.

Then out of nowhere an idea came to her. "I'm going to Grandma!"

She knew the way. First you went on the trolley; then in the subway; then on the trolley again. She had enough fare in her little red purse.

Grandma had said at first when she arrived, breathless, "Mary Lin, you shouldn't have done it!" She was all for taking her back.

But Mary Lin stayed a week at Grandma's. Grandma made her cookies and jelly tarts. She took her along to market when she went shopping and bought her tidbits on the way—peanuts or chocolates or a lollypop.

And in the house Mary Lin helped to make the beds and sat with a pan on her knees and shelled peas. She wiped the dishes after Grandma washed them. She dusted the furniture in the sitting room.

Mary Lin was happy. She forgot about her stepmother. She even forgot about Daddy.

And then in the middle of a Saturday afternoon in he walked.

"Hello, Mother!" he said to Grandma.

"Hello, Mary Lin!"

He kissed them both, then sat a while and talked to Grandma about his leg. He looked thinner and a little pale. At last he said, "Well, Mary Lin; time to get your things. We've got to be getting along home."

Mary Lin went for her hat and coat. Grandma wrapped her up some strawberry tarts and lemon cookies she had just made.

"Goodbye, Mary Lin," she said. "Come again!"

"She will," promised Daddy. "Very soon."

He was jolly on the way home; he told her jokes and riddles and funny stories. Never once did he ask, "Mary Lin, why did you run away?" Soon Mary Lin had a feeling he would never ask her that.

"Does your leg hurt any more, Daddy? Is it all, all better?" she asked.

"All, all better," said Daddy.

There seemed to be no one about when they got home. Mary Lin went toward her room to put her things away. As she opened the door she had a queer feeling that something was somehow different. She looked around once, twice. And then she saw it—standing on the top of her desk in a gold frame. Mother's picture. The same as it had been in the little brown book only larger, brighter. Mother stood there and smiled at Mary Lin. Mary Lin reached up and took the picture down.

She was holding it in her hands, looking at it intently, when a step sounded behind her. And there was her stepmother in the doorway, smiling.

"Do you like it, Mary Lin?" she asked. "I had it made from your little one. I found it on the floor one morning and it looked so shabby I thought you would like a new one to keep on your desk."

Mary Lin stood there unanswering. So her stepmother hadn't taken the picture away! She had just borrowed it to have this big one made in a gold frame. And she was to keep it there right on her desk to have before her all the time. Why—why—her stepmother was *nice* to do that!

She stood there digesting that thought. Perhaps her stepmother wasn't like the stepmothers in the stories. Perhaps it was the way her mother had said—that only in stories were stepmothers bad.

Bewildered and puzzled, she put the picture back on her desk, then turned and raised inquiring eyes to her stepmother. Her stepmother smiled right back at her.

"You do like it, don't you, Mary Lin?"

Mary Lin nodded. A queer little lump was in her throat. "It's beautiful . . . You're—you're *nice*!"

Her stepmother stood very still a minute as if she hadn't heard. Mary Lin thought she was going to cry. But she didn't. She just blinked rapidly and put out her hand.

"L-Let's go to Daddy," she said.

Without any hesitation Mary Lin brought her own hand out.

Bootblacks and Professors

JUANITA McLEAN

"SHINE, mister?" How often has this familiar question been put to you? Thousands of times I am sure. What was your answer—yes or no? I hope it was yes.

Perhaps some of you claim that you have never heard these words before. Perhaps you haven't, but they are asked you, in some form, every day in your school life.

Our professors are very much like shine-boys. All they can do is to polish us up so that we will appear more brilliant. The bootblack does not give us our shoes; he only shines them. We cannot, therefore, expect our instructors to give us our education. We must acquire it by hard work, and we must prove ourselves to be ready for our final polish. Then, and only then, can we expect anyone to put the finishing touch on.

We do not get our shoes shined without some special reason. Neither should we take our education without some special purpose in mind, or its effect will not be noticed. Just as we must be careful in showing off our polished shoes for fear that the worn soles will be seen, so we must be careful how we show our education or our ragged edges will come into view.

We must keep our lives just as truthful, honest, and straight as we hold our foot on its platform. We must not be cheap about our polish or it will ruin our shoes; neither can we be cheap about our education or it will ruin our lives.

During the years we may change bootblacks several times in trying to find the one whose polish gives the best results. So in college we should experiment with different ideas that we may find the type of thinking most needed to brush clean the dust from our minds.

After we have acquired our polish, we must be careful where and how we step or it will soon wear off, leaving the surface duller than ever. We must continue to be honest—to be loyal to our ideals—if we hope to shine brightly all our lives.

The Delights of Study

ALICE BURROWES

OH, THE unparalleled delight of sitting down to a desk covered with books, bulging note books, freshly sharpened pencils, and pages of hastily scrawled assignment, with nothing to do for the next six hours but study!

On a typical one of these enjoyable evenings I remove my shoes, adjust the light, and taking a dozen or so sheets of paper, attack first my English theme. The sure-fire method which I use for writing a theme consists of chewing my pencil hungrily and staring off into space for long intervals of time. Eventually, according to the law of averages, an idea about a theme is bound to squeeze itself in among reminiscences of the past summer's dances and blissful day dreams of the coming week end's pleasures. When this idea finally does present itself, I scribble busily for five minutes and then, glancing at the clock, find it is time to listen to Tommy Dorsey. Listening to this program, naturally, is an unpleasant duty which in order to keep myself socially informed, I must undergo, even though it interrupts the keen enjoyment of expressing in theme form my opinions on the subject of the "Higher Education of Women."

I switch on the radio and open my French grammar. Learning French verbs in time with "Marie" and "The Toy Trumpet" is an art which can easily be mastered by the average student in a few hours' time. Of course a distinct disadvantage lies in the fact that on every program there is advertising which is somewhat disconcerting. It is very difficult to memorize the past definite forms of "avoir" while an announcer is expounding the virtues of Shine-Brite toothpaste which is guaranteed to bring you sparkling teeth and romantic love within three weeks after you buy your first tube.

At the end of the program, I say goodbye to the harmonious intonations of T. Dorsey, his trombone and his orchestra, and immediately become deeply engrossed in fascinating statistics concerning the number of barbarians enlisted in the army of the Western Roman Empire in 450 A. D. At the close of an hour of intense concentration I am rudely awakened by the realization that the chapter ended two pages back, and I have been eagerly delving into next week's assignment.

Regretfully I leave the declining Roman Empire and turn to the subject of chemistry. Tonight I have twelve absorbing problems on the transformation of chemical energy and the conservation of mass. That these problems require time and effort does not disturb me because, as you no doubt know, the college girl's greatest delight comes in working out a problem which is extremely complicated. The reason for her delight lies of course in the fact that such a problem tests her mentality to its fullest capacity.

And now at last I come back with renewed pleasure to my English theme and have just begun to write when my room mate reminds me that there is going to be a birthday party in the parlors. With a sigh I close my books and go on reluctant feet to fulfill my annoying social obligations. My only eager thought is for the moment when I can return to the one joy in life—my studies.

Book Review

RENOWN

By Frank O. Hough

MARGARET COBB

DURING the American Revolution there lived a man who was known then and is still remembered as "The Traitor." He was not a bad man; he was truly conscientious in all he did. The supreme sin he committed he considered at the time, and for long afterwards, the best thing for his country. Yet that country branded him—a traitor. And wherever he went after that he was doomed to be misunderstood and mistrusted, to be considered all his life and to go down in history as — "The Traitor."

Frank O. Hough has told the story of Benedict Arnold with a sympathy and understanding which must give to most readers a new insight into the character of "The Traitor." A real student of history, the author has not tried to distort the facts to excuse his hero; he didn't need to. The simple truth is enough to make us pity and even admire Benedict Arnold.

It makes an interesting and memorable book which tells of a life full of action and excitement. Hough is at his best describing action. Some of his conversations may seem stilted, his women may toss their heads and say "La!" in a manner that is not quite natural; but the battles are thrilling, and Arnold is real enough.

Against a changing background, first of the ragged American army, then of the British lines, then England during the stormy period of the French Revolution, Canada in its first raw decades, and finally England again, he stands out clearly as his unhappy life unfolds. Everything he tried seemed somehow to end in tragic futility. He loved his country, did all he did as he said, "in its best interest," yet he found himself a lonely exile from that country. He loved fighting and was a genius at it, but in the prime of his life he was refused permission to serve in England's army. He had been a traitor to one nation; might he not betray another? Time and again he tried to amass a fortune for his family, but he never succeeded because ill-luck appeared to dog his steps whichever way he turned. He wanted, above everything else, renown, the praise of men, a name to hand down to his children. And history branded him a traitor—this his gift to the future.

Truly a tragic life! Yet as long as there was anything to hope for, anything to fight for, Benedict Arnold hung on, kept struggling with matchless enthusiasm and courage against a fate which seemed bound to hold him down. Not until he had failed in an attempt to begin life anew in Canada, not until he knew at last that he could never be a soldier in the British army, not until he faced a future which held absolutely nothing for him, did he give up. Then the confidence which had upheld him all his life that his great decision had been right gave way to doubt. Could he have been wrong? Would America have been better off under England than she was now—an independent nation? And during the rapid decline of his health which followed, he must have decided, for, as he lay dying, he asked for his old American uniform.

The author brings this gripping story to its moving climax, then finishes quickly. He has done his job well. For Arnold is to everyone who reads the book a very real and human man, a man deserving sympathy—and renown.

EXCHANGE

AT the time that this issue of the *Wesleyan* goes to press, no fall exchanges have been received. Therefore, our comments will be based upon commencement publications of last spring.

On the whole, Mercer University's *Silhouette* lives up to its claims—liberal, progressive, modern, and anti-war. "Good-Bye, Maw Good-Bye Paw" is an excellent satire on soldiers and war. Although published last spring, it is even more pertinent at the present time. The *Silhouette* claiming free speech for all students, prints "Nothing Religious," a feature in which a student speaks his mind on the subject of religion. Believing that religion is a thing of interest to the student body, he asks these questions:

1. Has it ever occurred to you that the greatest problem in your life is sin?
2. If you are a Christian are you happy?

The Shorter College *Chimes* carries an interesting editorial "Should College Credit Be Given For Work On College Publications—Pro and Con." The argument for college credit offers the advantage of a better publication and assistance to students working on publications. The other side of the argument, although presented in a rather vague manner, all boiled down to the fact that Shorter doesn't have to bother anyway, since she has no department of journalism.

The most attractive feature of *Chimes* is the art work. We like the original block prints.

Huntingdon College publishes a very neat little magazine, the *Prelude*. The cover and the block print illustrating the senior class poem are unusually good. The fiction is lively; the poetry, above the average.

The Distaff, published by Florida State College for Women offers a professional appearance that we like. "What American Way," an article worthy of note, draws a good picture of American scenes that the bill boards, geography books, and school histories fail to mention. The author is a bit cynical in her outlook, but she knows what she's talking about.

INTERPRETATION

●

Beauty walked the night . . .

Sweet haunting saddened strains
From the wind's wild lyre came
Sliding from the long dark needles
Trembling through the mighty pines,
Wavering in the night's still blue.
The music played across the fields
'Round the old white Grecian columns
Reaching up and seeking stars.
'Round and 'round the music echoed . . .
Sweet haunting saddened strains
Haunting melancholy pine-song!

Countless stars splintered pine boughs
Twinkling specks of molten gold,
Scattering, spilling pale glory
Down on columns white and cold.
Night was beautiful and old.

Love came whispering through the music,
Whispering through the stalwart columns,
Beckoning through night's singing beauty,
Waiting . . pausing . . breathlessly . . ,
Speaking softly of strange music, laughter,
Tears and fragile things, quietness, beauty,
Brave secure far-reaching wings.
Love paused flaming, trembling, ringing . . .
Swinging down with cosmic force . . .

Directly at the Thought's swift rod . . .
Like lightning . . . came understanding . . .
. God!

—Bascom Knight.

THE STEPHEN INHERITANCE

(Continued from page 5)

free to take care of you and help you win your strength back. (*She offers him support. They turn once and smile together as they leave the room.*)

Mark: I'm glad we haven't far to go; it must be nearly morning, Martie.

Curtain

Scene II

The same. It is the following afternoon. In the church are Mrs. Pottle, the rich, gaudily dressed woman who is buying the rail, and Mr. Martin, a lovable middle-aged preacher, whose life is entirely devoted to his people and their needs.

Mrs. Pottle: I just had to come and see it once more to be sure that everything is all right about moving it. I have planned that my men shall come for it at three-thirty.

Mr. Martin: That will be fine. We already have another made to put in its place.

Mrs. Pottle: Now, who did you say was the artist that made this?

Mr. Martin: His name was Mark Stephen. He was a sculptor that lived here in the town. When the church was built, he made the rail and gave it for the chancel.

Mrs. Pottle: (*Gushily*) Oh, I'm so interested!

Mr. Martin: That work has always been a valued piece—one that has meant much to our church and especially to Stephen's descendants. They have been devout worshipers here, and service to their church has always meant everything. We couldn't do without the present Stephens.

Mrs. Pottle: Oh, I can hardly wait to get the rail put in my chapel. I do not have a single antique, and this one will be the envy of all my friends.

Mr. Martin: We hate to give it up, but it is the only thing we can do to keep our church running.

Mrs. Pottle: Every time I look at it, it is more lovely. Mr. Martin, I am having a party at my house next week, and I am sure all of the people will want to see my new chapel. Certainly you could take a day off and come to the city. I would be happy to have you there, and you could tell my friends all about the rail. I am sure I cannot remember enough to tell them.

Mr. Martin: Thank you very much, but a day's work from my church is too much to miss. You see, I have calls to make and services to attend to, and my people depend on me.

Mrs. Pottle: Oh, you could have your assistants do it for one day. You must come. We will have toasts to the opening of the chapel, and if you are there we'll have some to you also. It will be a big occasion.

Mr. Martin: I am very sorry to say no, but thank you very much.

(*Mrs. Stephen comes in from the back.*)

Martha: Good afternoon, Mr. Martin.

Mr. Martin: (*Turning around, happily surprised.* Why, good afternoon to you, Mrs. Stephen. I am happy that you have come in. I want you to meet Mrs. Pottle. She is the one who is buying the rail, and is here to see about having it moved this afternoon. This is Mrs. Stephen, Mrs. Pottle. (*To Mrs. Pottle.*)

Martha: How do you do?

Mrs. Pottle: Mrs. Stephen? That name is similar to the one of the man that carved the rail, isn't it?

Mr. Martin: It is the same. Old Stephen is your husband's great-great grandfather, isn't he, Mrs. Stephen?

Martha: Yes, we are mighty proud of that.

Mr. Martin: (*To Mrs. Pottle.*) Mr. Stephen has inherited the love for carving and does it beautifully himself.

Martha: Oh, thank you, Mr. Martin. Did you see that he had finished the new rail?

Mr. Martin: I hope it wasn't too much for him. He did not have to work so fast. This is a lovely piece he has done for us. (*Goes over to rail on the side.*) You see, Mrs. Pottle, he is the one that has made our new rail. We are fortunate in having such a well-trained artist as Mark to copy this beautiful piece.

Mrs. Pottle: (*Looking at the new rail.*) But of course nothing could be quite as fine as this piece is. Tell your husband that I think he did a wonderful job, for of course, it has taken years to give this the antique look that it has.

Martha: Thank you; I just had to come by to look at the rail once more before it was moved. It has meant a great deal to us to kneel here. I know you will take care of it, and that it will add a real bit of loveliness to your little church.

Mrs. Pottle: You know, I never have been the praying type, but when we built our new home the architect said what an ideal place we had for a chapel; so I just told him to plan for it. I think it was a brilliant idea. And since we didn't have any place for lovely old antiques in our house, I thought I could put this one there. I hated to hear all my friends talking about antiques and not have a single one; so now I shall just show them this.

Martha: Aren't you going to use it as a place of worship?

Mrs. Pottle: Well, we have not decided just what we shall do in the chapel. You see, we go to church in town every Sunday, and I would not miss seeing everyone there.

Mr. Martin: (*Looking out of the window.*) Why, Mrs. Stephen, here comes Mark into the church. He is too weak and sick to be up.

Martha: Oh my, my! (*Runs out to meet Mark and helps him in. He is even worse looking than he was the night before. He is dressed carelessly, having been forced to do it all by himself. Martha speaks to him in motherly fashion.*) You shouldn't have gotten out of bed to come up here, Mark. I told you I would see about it. Here, sit down and rest. You didn't even half get your suit on.

Mark: Martha I decided I would come and tell Mr. Martin before they moved the rail.

Mr. Martin: (*He has been talking with Mrs. Pottle, so he has not heard Mark.*) Mark, your new rail is a beauty, but I did not mean for you to hurry with it so. I know it has taken away your strength. Here, I want you to meet Mrs. Pottle. She is here seeing about having the rail moved. (*To Mrs. Pottle.*) This is Mr. Mark Stephen.

Mark: How do you do, Ma'am? (*Makes an effort to stand up.*)

Mrs. Pottle: How are you, Mr. Stephen? You have done a nice job on this copy. I am thrilled to death with the original. I have just been telling your wife how envious my friends are going to be when they see my chapel with this antique in it.

Mark: Mr. Martin, I thought may-

be I'd better tell you about the rail. (*As if to get something off his mind.*)

Martha: There now, Mark, I've told Mrs. Pottle everything she wanted to know about it. Come: I must take you home. (*Quite worried and afraid he will tell.*)

Mark: But I wanted to talk with Mr. Martin about it.

Mr. Martin: Mrs. Stephen is right, Mark; you go along home, and I will drop by and see how you are getting along this evening; then we can have a long talk and you will be more rested.

(*Men come in to take out the rail.*)

Man: We have the truck here to move the furniture, or whatever you want.

Mrs. Pottle: Oh, here are my men. (To the men.) Now handle it carefully and don't let your dirty hands ruin it. It is a rare antique. There will be someone at my house when you get there to show you what to do with it.

(*Mark and Martha watch the men pick up the rail that he has made. Once or twice Mark starts to tell Mr. Martin something, but Martha quiets him.*)

Mrs. Pottle: (*Arranging the money matters with Mr. Martin.*) Here, I will write you a check for it right now, and you will not have to give it another thought. (*She takes out her book and writes. As Martha and Mark see that the men are taking the rail, they start out.*)

Martha: (*Turns around.*) We are pleased to have met you, Mrs. Pottle. (*To Mr. Martin.*) Do come by the house tonight; Mark will be feeling better I am sure, and I have put on a chicken we can all have for dinner.

Mr. Martin: Thank you, I will, and I hope Mark is better.

Mrs. Pottle: Good-bye to both of you.

(*Mark and Martha look at the rail once more and exeunt.*)

Curtain

SCENE III

The last scene is in the late afternoon, a few days later, after the funeral of Mark Stephen.

(*Mrs. Stephen enters the church and walks slowly down the aisle, her eyes on the rail. She kneels and begins to pray.*)

Martha: (*Finally aloud.*) Dear Father, does Mark want me to tell? . . . Is it the thing I should do? . . . Be with me, and let me know what to do. I am thankful for my son who is left to keep me company. Give me strength to lead him and direct him as thou would desire . . . Oh God (*Silent awhile longer.*) Amen.

(*Mr Martin comes in from a side door and finds her still there looking at the rail.*)

Mr. Martin: Oh, there you are, Mrs. Stephen; I was just looking for you to walk on home with you.

Martha: Oh, thank you, my son is here and he will go. Mr. Martin the service was very comforting; thank you so much.

Mr. Martin: I am so glad. You know that nothing I could have said would been good enough for Mark. Mrs. Stephen, I was just wondering—do you think that Mark's trying to finish this rail in such a hurry made him weaken so?

Martha: Mr. Martin, that work on the rail was his life for the past few weeks; he was happy then. I would see him working there, and I would be thankful that it could make him enjoy living so. He felt like he was really doing some good.

Mr. Martin: He was, most certainly. And Mrs. Stephen, now we have his work here and the generations to follow will have it here—in memory of him.

Martha: (*Rather thoughtful.*) Yes . . Always.

(*Mark Stephen, Jr., a nice-looking young man of about twenty-three comes in.*)

Mark: Oh, there you are, Mother! Are you ready to go home?

Martha: Yes. But let's go by the gave first.

Mr. Martin: I'll go with you in a minute. Do you know what Reverend Mr. Johnson's text is for tomorrow night?

Mark: Has it been announced?

Mr. Martin: Let's see. (*He fumbles with papers in his coat pocket, finally selecting one.*) Here it is. His topic is, "Shall the heathen rage, and the wicked inherit the earth?" Interesting subject. But I'd better go get my hat. (*Exit.*)

Martha: The wicked inherit the earth? (*Pensively.*) The heathen rage?

Mark: Mother, what is the matter? Why do you hesitate over that?

Martha: I was just thinking . . . Son, don't go back to work for a while. Stay here with me. A nice rest would do you good.

Mark: I don't need a rest, Mother. But I have decided to stay here and take up father's work. He always seemed happy here doing what he could for everyone else.

Martha: Do you mean you will do your carving here?

Mark: What do you think of the idea?

Martha: I can hardly believe it . . . I'm so happy; I think it's splendid! Maybe there will be some things that I can tell you about.

Mark: Yes, I'm sure there will be. You have been such a wonderful help to dad Mother, don't worry about the rail!

Martha: (*Astonished.*) About the rail?

Mark: Yes, I know all about it. Certainly I could tell the difference between dad's carving and the older piece, but I am sure you two did the right thing. That woman doesn't deserve any priceless piece of carving in her modern house. It just wouldn't be right.

Martha: Yes, that is what we thought. This is the only rail at which we have ever worshiped, and we couldn't bear the thought of it gone. We wanted to leave it here for our descendants just as it was left for us.

Mark: We will always be sure that it is.

(*Mr. Martin comes in.*)

Mr. Martin: Now we can go. I am all ready.

Martha: And so are we. (*They walk out together.*) Mr. Martin, I think I should like to go with you tomorrow night. (*Thinking aloud.*) The wicked shall not inherit the earth; the heathen shall not rage.

Curtain

WOODLAND SONG

Through the dark forest cool silver lakes lay,
And sunlight dances on boughs here and there;
The notes of a bird drift up to the day,
And the song of the bird is a prayer.

—Winnett Turner.

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